

CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A stabilized earth structure comprising:

a fill, with a front face;

a facing along a said front face of the structure;

main stabilizing ~~strips~~ bands disconnected from the facing and extending through a first stabilized zone of the fill for stabilizing said fill, said bands situated separate from, spaced from and behind said front facing;

secondary stabilizing members connected to the facing and extending in a second stabilized zone of the fill stabilized by friction between the stabilizing members and fill, said second zone extending between the front face and partially into said first zone which has, with said first stabilized zone, a common part where loads are transmitted between the main stabilizing ~~strips~~ bands and the secondary members by only the material of the fill.

2. (Previously Presented). A structure according to Claim 1, wherein the secondary members extend into the fill up to a distance substantially shorter than the main stabilizing strips, with respect to the front face.

3. (Previously Presented). A structure according to Claim 1, wherein the facing comprises prefabricated elements in which the secondary members are partly embedded.

4. (Previously Presented). A structure according to Claim 3, wherein the prefabricated elements are made of concrete and the secondary members comprise flexible synthetic stabilizing members each having at least one part cast into the concrete of one of the prefabricated elements.

5. (Previously Presented). A structure according to Claim 1, wherein the facing comprises prefabricated elements each having at least one projecting portion forming one of the secondary members.

6. (Cancelled).

7. (Currently Amended). A method for building a stabilized earth structure, comprising the steps of:

positioning a facing along a front face of the structure delimiting a volume to be filled,

placing main mechanically stabilizing ~~strips~~ bands in a first zone of said volume, wherein the main stabilizing ~~strips~~ bands are not permanently connected to the facing and extend through the first zone,

placing secondary mechanically stabilizing members connected to the facing in a second zone of said volume, said first and second zones having a part in common, and

introducing fill material into said volume and compacting the fill material, whereby once the fill material has been introduced and compacted, loads are transmitted between the main stabilizing ~~strips~~ bands and the secondary members by only the fill material situated in said common part and each zone is mechanically stabilized by the stabilizing members or bands therein.

8. (Currently Amended). A method according to Claim 7, wherein the secondary members are installed up to a distance substantially shorter than the main stabilizing ~~strips~~ bands with respect to the front face.

9. (Previously Presented). A method according to Claim 7, wherein the facing comprises prefabricated elements incorporating secondary members.

10. (Previously Presented). A method according to Claim 9, wherein the prefabricated elements are made of concrete and the secondary members comprise synthetic flexible stabilizing members each having at least one part cast into the concrete of one of the prefabricated elements.

11. (Previously Presented). A method according to Claim 9, wherein at least some of the prefabricated elements have at least one projecting portion forming one of the secondary elements.

12. (Previously Presented). A method according to Claim 10, wherein the cast part of said flexible synthetic stabilizing member follows a loop within said one of the prefabricated elements, so that said flexible synthetic stabilizing member has two sections projecting into the second zone of the fill.

13. (Currently Amended). The method as claimed in Claim 7, wherein the step of placing the main stabilizing ~~strips~~ bands comprises arranging the main stabilizing ~~strips~~ bands along zigzag paths in the first zone.

14. (Currently Amended). The method as claimed in Claim 7, further comprising the step of determining independently an optimal configuration and density of the main stabilizing ~~strips~~ bands in said first zone and an optimal configuration and density of the secondary members in said second zone.

15. (Currently Amended). The method as claimed in Claim 7, further comprising the step of connecting at least some of the main stabilizing ~~strips~~ bands to the facing by means of temporary attachments designed to break in the step of introducing and compacting the fill material.

16. (Previously Presented). The structure as claimed in Claim 4, wherein the cast part of said flexible synthetic stabilizing member follows a loop within said one of the prefabricated elements, so that said flexible synthetic stabilizing member has two sections projecting into the second zone of the fill.

17. (Currently Amended). The structure as claimed in Claim 4, wherein the flexible synthetic stabilizing members are ~~strip-shaped~~ bands.

18. (Currently Amended). The structure as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the main stabilizing ~~strips~~ bands are arranged along zigzag paths in the first zone.

19. (New). A stabilized earth structure comprising, in combination:

a volume of fill material having a front face;

a facing at the front face;

stabilizing members attached to the facing, said stabilizing members extending into the fill material to form a first mechanically stabilized zone in the fill material;

stabilizing elements unconnected to the facing and unconnected to the stabilizing members, said elements dispersed in the fill material to form a second mechanically stabilized zone in the fill material separated from the facing and overlapping, in part, the first

zone, said elements and stabilizing members each interacting independently with said fill material by frictional engagement with the fill material to provide a stabilized earth structure in both said first zone and said second zone simultaneously.

20. (New). The structure of Claim 19 wherein the stabilizing members are bands arrayed in at least two layers and said stabilizing elements are bands arrayed in at least one layer.